

330 CMR 10.00: PREVENTION OF THE SPREAD OF RABIES

Section

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10.01: Definitions

Animal Inspector: A municipal Animal Inspector nominated under M.G.L. c. 129 and approved by the Department of Food and Agriculture's Bureau of Animal Health.

Currently Vaccinated: A domestic animal which has received a properly administered rabies vaccine approved by the United States Department of Agriculture ("USDA") for use in that species, and has received all other rabies vaccinations and boosters required pursuant to 330 CMR 10.02 and 10.03.

Department: The Department of Food and Agriculture.

Exposed: Shall include: Exposed by Direct Contact, Exposed by Proximity or received a Wound of Unknown Origin.

Exposed by Direct Contact: Had physical contact with, received a bite or scratch from, or ate the viscera of a confirmed or suspected rabid animal.

Exposed by Proximity: Seen near or in the vicinity of a confirmed rabid animal, but which had no physical contact with nor received any wounds from the confirmed rabid animal.

Isolation: Restricting a domestic animal from any direct human or other animal contact; confining the animal to a facility such as a dog pound, veterinary hospital, commercial kennel or quarantine facility for livestock approved by the Animal Inspector of the appropriate municipality; or isolation at home under conditions approved by the Animal Inspector of the municipality and the Department.

Primary Series: Two consecutive rabies vaccinations nine to 12 months apart given to a dog or a cat by a licensed veterinarian.

Quarantine: Confinement of a domestic animal from humans and other animals for the purposes of observing the animal for signs of rabies and minimizing chances of the animal spreading rabies to humans and other animals. This includes isolation and strict confinement.

Rabies: A disease of mammals, virtually always fatal, caused by the "Rabies virus" and characterized by progressive deterioration of the central nervous system.

Rabies Virus: A virus, belonging to the family Rhabdoviridae, in the genus Lyssavirus, with multiple strains.

State Laboratory: The Department of Public Health, State Laboratory Institute's Virology Laboratory.

Strict Confinement: Maintenance of a domestic animal in an escape-proof, solid-walled building with a roof, approved by the Animal Inspector of the municipality. The animal may be leash walked by an adult or under the direct supervision of an adult.

10.01: continued

Ten Day Quarantine: Strict confinement of an apparently healthy domestic animal that has bitten or scratched a human or other domestic animal.

Unvaccinated: Any domestic animal which has never been vaccinated for rabies; any previously vaccinated animal which had not been revaccinated prior to the expiration of its most recent vaccination; any animal which had been vaccinated within the previous 30 days and did not have a valid rabies vaccination at the time of inoculation; any animal of a species for which there is no approved United States Department of Agriculture ("USDA") licensed rabies vaccine.

Wound of Unknown Origin: A puncture wound, cut or scratch which has broken the skin and was obtained from an unknown source but is presumed to be from another animal.

10.02: Initial Series of Vaccinations Required for Dogs and Cats

- (1) Any person acquiring a dog or cat shall have the animal vaccinated by a licensed veterinarian against rabies by the age of six months or within 30 days of acquisition if the animal is over six months of age, unless proof of previous vaccination is available.
- (2) An initial vaccination received by a dog or cat shall be considered effective 30 days after the date of vaccination, and will be valid for a period of one calendar year from the date of vaccination.
- (3) Between nine and 12 months from the initial vaccination, the dog or cat shall be revaccinated by a licensed veterinarian thereby obtaining its primary series of rabies vaccinations.
- (4) Only certificates issued by the licensed veterinarian who administered the vaccine shall be considered proof of a dog or cat's vaccination status.

10.03: Subsequent Vaccinations Required for Dogs and Cats

- (1) All dogs and cats shall receive booster vaccinations at the intervals recommended by the manufacturer of the vaccine.
- (2) An animal whose vaccination status cannot be determined, or whose booster revaccination has not been administered within the time frame recommended by the manufacturer, will be considered vaccinated only for a period of one calendar year from the date of its last recorded vaccination. A dog or cat which has not received its primary series will also be considered vaccinated only for a period of one calendar year from the date of the last recorded vaccine.
- (3) A vaccination, received by a dog or cat which had a primary series but did not receive a booster vaccination within the interval recommended by the manufacturer of the original vaccine, shall be considered effective 30 days from the date of the vaccination and deemed effective for the longest time frame recommended by the manufacturer.

10.04: General Provisions

Any person having knowledge of:

- (1) The existence of a domestic animal which has been Exposed to the Rabies Virus, or
- (2) The existence of a domestic animal which has bitten or scratched another domestic animal or human  
shall report immediately to the Animal Inspector the existence of such animal, a description of said animal, the place where it was last seen and the owner's name, if known.  
The Animal Inspector shall, upon receiving such a report, investigate whether a human or a domestic animal has received a bite or scratch from a domestic animal or a domestic animal has been Exposed to the Rabies virus. If so, the Animal Inspector shall determine whether the animals have been vaccinated, the type and date of vaccination, any unusual behavior of the animals and a list of other domestic animals or humans Exposed to the animals.

10.05: Requirements for Any Domestic Animal which Bites a Human or Another Domestic Animal

The Animal Inspector, after completing an investigation and determining that a domestic animal has bitten or scratched a human or another domestic animal, shall issue a written order to the person in custody of the biting animal requiring the animal to be placed under Strict Confinement for a period of ten days. The Ten Day quarantine applies regardless of the vaccination status of the biting animal.

If during this ten-day period the animal in Strict Confinement displays symptoms compatible with Rabies, the animal shall be euthanized immediately, and the Animal Inspector and Department shall be notified. Samples from any such euthanized animal, or animal which dies from any cause during the quarantine period, shall be submitted for rabies testing as described in 330 CMR 10.09.

10.06: Requirements for Any Domestic Animals which are Exposed

The Animal Inspector, upon completion of an investigation and upon determination that a domestic animal has been Exposed, shall issue a written order to the person in custody of the exposed animal requiring the following:

(1) Where the Exposed domestic animal is currently vaccinated, the Animal Inspector shall require the administration of a booster vaccination to the animal within 24 hours, if its last vaccination was administered over one month prior to exposure. Additionally, the animal shall be placed under Strict Confinement for 45 days.

(2) Where the Exposed domestic animal is Unvaccinated the Animal Inspector shall request from the owner of the animal written permission to euthanize the animal. If the owner is unwilling to consent to euthanasia, the Animal Inspector shall issue a written order to the person in custody of the animal requiring the following:

(a) Any dog or cat Exposed by Direct Contact to a confirmed rabid animal, as determined by State Laboratory testing, shall be placed into Isolation for a period of three months to be followed by three months of strict confinement, and shall be vaccinated one month prior to release.

(b) Any domestic animal other than a dog or cat Exposed by Direct Contact to a confirmed rabid animal as determined by State Laboratory testing shall be placed in strict confinement for six months.

(c) Any domestic animal Exposed by Direct Contact to a suspected rabid animal or any animal which has received a Wound of Unknown Origin shall be placed under Strict Confinement for a period of six months. Dogs and cats shall be vaccinated one month prior to release.

(d) Dogs and cats Quarantined for six months for reasons described in 330 CMR 10.06(2)(a) or (c) which were considered Unvaccinated because the vaccination had been within the 30 days prior to exposure do not require revaccination one month prior to release.

(e) Any domestic animal Exposed by Proximity to a confirmed rabid animal, as determined by State Laboratory testing, shall be placed under Strict Confinement for a period of six months. Dogs and cats shall be vaccinated prior to Quarantine.

(3) The person in custody of the animal under Quarantine is required to immediately notify the Department, a veterinarian, the Animal Inspector and any Exposed humans of any unusual changes in behavior or health status of the animal which may indicate rabies.

The person in custody of the animal shall make similar notification if the animal dies during its Quarantine period. Any veterinarian who euthanizes a domestic animal for any reason while the animal is under Quarantine must immediately notify the Animal Inspector of the appropriate municipality. Notification shall be made prior to the disposal of the animal.

(4) Upon determination that an order has been violated, the Animal Inspector shall recommend that the Department issue an order to seize and euthanize the animal and have the animal submitted to the State Laboratory for Rabies testing.

(5) No animal shall be released from Quarantine without written authorization from the Department or the Animal Inspector.

10.06: continued

(6) The Animal Inspector shall carry out, or cause to be carried out, euthanasia orders issued by the Department pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, regulations, and local animal euthanasia and disposal practices.

10.07: Expense of Quarantines and Testing

The expense associated with Quarantine or euthanasia will be the owner's responsibility. In situations where the animal has no owner, the city or town will be financially responsible for costs incurred.

10.08: Inspections

Animal Inspectors must approve the places where animals are Quarantined. All animals under Quarantine must be observed by the Animal Inspector on a regular basis.

10.09: Collection of Samples

Animal Inspectors shall ensure that samples are collected from any domestic animal ordered to be euthanized if it has bitten or scratched a human or other domestic animal.

All samples shall be collected in accordance with the guidelines established by the Department and the State Laboratory.

The Animal Inspector shall ensure that all animals which die for any reason during Isolation, Strict Confinement or a Ten Day Quarantine shall have their heads removed immediately and submitted to the State Laboratory for Rabies testing unless other arrangements have been made with the Department.

10.10: Record Keeping

Each Animal Inspector shall maintain records of:

- (1) All inspections conducted;
- (2) All quarantines issued and released; and
- (3) Disposition of animals that died while under quarantine.

Forms for the above shall be provided by the Department, and the Animal Inspector shall submit these records to the Department by the last day of each month.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

330 CMR 10.00: M.G.L. c. 129, §§ 2, 3, 7, 11, 18 through 21 and 28.